

THE STANDARD

Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXXI

NOVEMBER 1 — GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

NUMBER 3

MEDITATION

Too Much for God!

"So the people were restrained from bringing."

Exodus 36:6b

Jehovah had spoken unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take My offering.

And then followed a catalog of all the precious things which the Lord desired.

And the purpose which Jehovah had with all these offerings is stated at the end of the catalog: "And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

Relative that sanctuary it is well that you read Hebrews 8 and 9. There you read that Moses was shown a pattern of heavenly things, and according to that pattern he had to build a sanctuary where the Lord might dwell among His people. This last clause also tells us what the "heavenly things" are. They are the things of God's eternal love and friendship for Israel of the ages, for His perfect and glorious church.

So the sanctuary was the visible manifestation of the invisible covenant love of God. And Moses had to build it.

But he had no means for this gigantic task.

And therefore we read, as I have transcribed above, that God gave commandment to Moses to have it proclaimed throughout the camp of the Israelites that God wished His people to bring unto Him gold, silver, precious stones, brass, purple, blue, fine linen, cunning work, badgers' skins, rams' skins, etc.

And what was the result?

This: they brought so much that the workmen came to Moses and said: The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make.

And Moses gave commandment and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.

For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.

You have noted that this last part is a direct quotation.

What shall we more say?

The effect upon us is overwhelming.

Imagine: the people of God were restrained from giving for the work of the sanctuary!

If I might translate the facts and circumstances in modern language, we would see the spectacle of an announcement in the Sunday bulletin: People of God! At the last counting it was revealed that you gave too much for the service of the work. And so we will have to restrain you from giving any more. It would not do for your consistory to open a Bank where we might store this great surplus. And so, until further notice, please, do not give anymore.

And do not say at this juncture that we may not translate the facts alluded to in our modern language; that the facts of Exodus and the facts of our church life are two entities and not one and the same revelation of Jehovah, for then you reveal utter ignorance of the fact that the service of the work of the sanctuary under Israel, and the service of the work to-day in our churches is one and the same thing, only more so.

More so, because the fulfilment of the tabernacle has come, and that is Jesus.

Now, Jesus and the tabernacle tell the same wonderful story: God stretches the canopy of His everlasting Home above our heads. The difference is that with Moses it was just a pattern of heavenly things, but with us it is the fulfilment of these heavenly things. The heavenly things are the love of God and His everlasting mercy in Jesus Christ. Well, He came, suffered, died and rose again, and went to heaven to prepare a place for us in the heavenly tabernacle.

And what we have on earth instead of Moses' tabernacle is the preaching of the Gospel, which includes Mission endeavour, as well as the study of theology, the service of prayer and adoration, the rites of baptism and the Lord's Holy Supper, and the service of the love of God toward the poor.

For that you must have buildings, etc.

And all that service of the work costs money.

And even as in the Old Testament, so also now, God causes it be proclaimed throughout the camp, that we must offer for the service of the work. Every church has its budget.

Notice: God wants to reveal His everlasting love for you, my brother! God wants to show how He takes you under the shadow of His roof in the heavenly Home, my sister!

And He says: Now, my children, you may help Me in this revelation! You may help Me in bringing money for this manifestation of My covenant!

Astounding!

God could have done it otherwise. There are thousands of ways to bring the sons and daughters to glory.

But God said to Israel: Bring Me the stuff for the making of the sanctuary. And in the New Testament: Bring me the stuff necessary for the preaching of My Christ! Both are the service of the work of God.

Again: Astounding!

I may help to reveal the love of God!

Yes, Jesus must be preached!

He must be preached for yourself, for your neighbour, and for your generations following.

And we are allowed to do all that through the paying of the budget. Each may give according as the Lord has blessed him or her. Even the children may bring their nickles and dimes to the catechism classes, Sunday Schools, and Young People's societies.

What unspeakable blessing there is in the paying of the budget!

Conversely, how terrible a condemnation when we say with our refusal to pay our share of the cost of the sanctuary: As far as I am concerned, let God be silent anent His everlasting love in Jesus.

Or that you say: Alright! give me ten cents' worth! When you could give dollars!

All this brings me to the final thought: the possibility to do according to the commandment to bring for the service of the work.

Let us confess it from the heart: no one is willing to bring the stuff for the service of the sanctuary.

Oh yes, we will bring the stuff necessary for the sanctuary of *man*! Many such sanctuaries are built throughout the ages. Among all the heathens you find costly temples and beautiful ceremonies, and some not so beautiful, but ugly and horrible. To mention one: the fiery mouth of Moloch, through which went the little babes for a sacrifice and atonement. But man has always been willing to offer for a sanctuary for man. Cathedrals were built by man and for man. Paul would say of them: Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; (but) not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

The father of all such will worship is Cain, who indeed brought a sacrifice, but it was not in any honor. He refused to bring the stuff for the service of the work of God. What is the work of God? The bringing in of the first begotten into the world, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And therefore, at that early age of Cain, it was the bringing of a bleeding lamb. He refused to do that. But he would bring of the fruit of the land, and thus do as though nothing had happened. He would be the priest of creation and bring the creation to God: his own works: the fruit of the field.

And Cain has had many followers: all manifesting the pride of life! But not the humility of Jesus Christ, nor His heavenly joy in God, the God of our salvation.

What then? How is it possible to bring the stuff for the service of the work?

Listen to what God said to Moses: . . . that they bring Me an offering: of every man that giveth it *willingly with his heart* ye shall take My offering.

Later, much later we listen to David: "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer *so willingly* after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee . . . O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Thy people, and *prepare their heart unto Thee*."

And still later we listen to Paul: "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, not according to what he hath not."

Oh yes, the willing heart and the willing mind!

And their origin is God, for we work out our own salvation, also in giving to the service of the work, for it is God that worketh in us to *will and to do* of His goodpleasure.

It is not of him that willeth, not of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy.

It is wrong to give grudgingly, or of necessity. It were better you had not given at all. Forsooth, such sin is the lesser sin.

Grudgingly: are you there again? Shall there ever be an end of giving to the causes of God? Church, theological school, emeritus fund, Mission endeavour, needy churches, needy students, Christian school, and what have you? I am getting so weary of giving to God! Then you give grudgingly. (I should have included the Holland Home, Pine Rest and the Christian Psychopathic Hospital and Children's Retreat, Bethesda, etc. for that belongs very really to the service of the work. As also the poor fund every Sabbath.) You give grudgingly when you would much rather keep all that money at home, warmly in your pocket.

Of necessity: when you give because you cannot very well refuse to give: your name and position in the church and the community would suffer. There is an unholy constraint in your giving when you give out of necessity. And also such giving is doomed.

But of a willing heart and mind, for God loveth the cheerful giver.

The cheerful heart is the gift of God.

Thank Him if you discover such a cheerful hearth within you.

Money given to God is placed on everlasting interest. Even a glass of water given to the thirsty in the name of a disciple will have its reward.

Money given to God acquires a fruit that is unspeakable.

And you do not have to wait until you are in heaven where our budgets are kept in God's bookkeeping.

You have it here and now whenever you place your envelop in the basket, the hallowed basket.

Listen to your heart when next you drop the dollars in that basket!

Do you then hear heaven's song of salvation?

If we all gave in such spirit, there would soon be too much, too much for God!

G.V.



O LORD, THOU JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH

O Lord, Thou Judge of all the earth,
To whom all vengeance doth belong,
Arise and show Thy glory forth,
Requite the proud, condemn the wrong.

How long, O Lord, in boastful pride
Shall wicked men triumphant stand?
How long shall they afflict Thy saints
And devastate Thy chosen land?

The widow and the fatherless
They slay, and helpless strangers smite:
The faithful God they do not fear,
They say the Lord will not requite.

Be wise, ye fools and brutish men;
Shall not He see who formed the eye?
Shall not He hear who formed the ear,
And judge, who reigneth, God Most High?

The Lord will judge in righteousness,
From Him all truth and knowledge flow;
The foolish thoughts of wicked men,
How vain they are the Lord doth know.

That man is blest whom Thou, O Lord,
With chastening hand dost teach Thy will,
For in the day when sinners fall
That man in peace abideth still.

The Lord will not cast off His own,
Nor His inheritance forsake;
Just judgment shall at length prevail,
And upright hearts shall courage take.

Who will arise for my defense
Against the wicked in the land?
Against iniquity and wrong
What man for me will valiant stand?

Psalm 94:1-8

THE STANDARD BEARER

Semi-monthly, except monthly during July and August

Published by the REFORMED FREE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
P. O. Box 881, Madison Square Station, Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

Editor — REV. HERMAN HOEKSEMA

Communications relative to contents should be addressed to Rev. H. Hoeksema, 1139 Franklin St., S. E., Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

All matters relative to subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. G. Pipe, 1463 Ardmore St., S. E., Grand Rapids 7, Michigan.

Announcements and Obituaries must be mailed to the above address and will be published at a fee of \$1.00 for each notice.

RENEWALS: Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received, it is assumed that the subscriber wishes the subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order.

Subscription price: \$4.00 per year

Entered as Second Class matter at Grand Rapids, Michigan

C O N T E N T S

MEDITATION —	
"Too Much for God!".....	49
Rev. G. Vos	
EDITORIALS —	
"A Protest and Its Reply".....	52
Rev. H. Hoeksema	
OUR DOCTRINE —	
The Triple Knowledge (Part III — Of Thankfulness).....	54
Rev. H. Hoeksema	
THE DAY OF SHADOWS —	
Exposition of Isaiah.....	57
Rev. G. M. Ophoff	
FROM HOLY WRIT —	
Exposition of II Philippians 2:21-26.....	59
Rev. G. Lubbers	
IN HIS FEAR —	
"Shameful and Revealing".....	61
Rev. J. A. Heys	
CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH —	
The Church and the Sacraments.....	63
Rev. H. Veldman	
THE VOICE OF OUR FATHERS —	
The Canons of Dordrecht (Art. 13).....	65
Rev. H. C. Hoeksema	
DECENCY AND ORDER —	
"The Ministry of the Word".....	67
"A Parenthesis".....	68
Rev. G. Vanden Berg	
ALL AROUND US —	
"Reformed or Arminian".....	70
Kuiper Criticizes De Jong's Book.....	70
Rev. M. Schipper	
CONTRIBUTIONS —	
"A Quotation".....	72
George TenElshof	

EDITORIALS

A Protest and its Reply

The last part of the reply of the former Consistory of Kalamazoo to brother Meninga is perhaps the most interesting, and also the most important, because there the Rev. Knott (who undoubtedly is the author of this reply, although his consistory signed it) enters into the contents of the statements by the Rev. De Wolf and the criticism and judgment of the Classis. Again I will answer it in order, quoting the various parts first, and then giving my answer. The former Consistory of Kalamazoo writes as follows:

"2. That the statements made by the Rev. De Wolf are not literally or, per se, heretical.

"a. Per se, or literally, heretical statements must contain within themselves and directly, without further interpretation, the condemned heretical tenets. Required interpretations of questionable statements, and various contentions as to what meaning its choice of words may have, are proof that such statements are not per se heretical. Statements such as 'God is evil,' or 'Christ is not the Son of God,' are literally heretical statements. Such statements need no interpretation, they are clear in themselves, leaving no doubt what they mean. Surely, the statements of Rev. De Wolf cannot be put in this class.

"1) The committee of pre-advice, reporting to the classis on this matter, May 19, 1953, was divided as to the interpretation of the statements.

"2) Even Rev. Hoeksema himself interprets the statements. States Hoeksema: 'But he (Rev. De Wolf) preached that God promises to every one head for head and soul for soul, salvation if they believe. What does this mean? This: a. God on His part is willing to save everyone. It is His promise to all. The promise is as general as possible. b. But whether the promise is to be realized depends on an act of man. God is willing, if man is willing.' Hence, Rev. Hoeksema interprets Rev. De Wolf's statements, thereby denying that they are per se heretical.

"3) Rev. Hoeksema and others have written and printed thousands of words to make clear to the public, according to their convictions, what is the proper and only interpretation or meaning of Rev. De Wolf's statements.

"a) Classis ignored Rev. De Wolf's interpretation and isolated the statements from the context in which they appeared.

"b) Classis said they were per se heretical, but really accepted the interpretation of the protestants, and proceeded to judge on the basis of that interpretation."

Thus far the first paragraph of the reply to the protest of brother Meninga as far as the contents of the statements are concerned.

The main contention of this entire paragraph is that if certain statements are not per se, or literally, heretical, so

clearly that it needs no proof that they are, they cannot be condemned by any ecclesiastical gathering. As long as interpretations are required in order to make clear to others that the statements are literally heretical, according to the former Consistory of Kalamazoo (Rev. Knott), such statements must be considered proper, orthodox, and, in a Reformed church, Reformed. And as examples of statements that are per se, or literally, heretical, the former Consistory of Kalamazoo offers two "God is evil," and "Christ is not the Son of God."

What a superficial.—I would almost say, nonsensical,—argumentation this is.

I would like to ask the Rev. Knott (and his former consistory) whether he never made a study of the history of doctrine. If he did, I would like to challenge him to point out any controversy in the church of Christ in the past that concerned statements that were per se, or literally, heretical, and that needed no explanation that they were such to the people of God in general. Knott quotes as such a literal statement: "God is evil." But I like to ask him when or where in the church of Christ there was ever any controversy about such a statement. He could just as well have said, "Light is darkness. Black is white." No, indeed, the church of Christ never had any controversy about statements like those.

But for the rest, controversies in the church of Christ always concerned statements that, apparently, were not literally heretical, but that were distorted by heretics in a different sense from which the church interpreted them.

This is true even with that second example given by the Rev. Knott and his former consistory: "Christ is not the Son of God." Does not the Rev. Knott know that this was literally never denied? Arius did not deny that Christ is the Son of God. And if Knott makes no further explanation of this statement, he may very well be a heretic.

And thus it was with every controversy in the church of Christ. Let me but refer you to the Arminian controversy, that was settled by the Reformed Churches in 1618-'19 by the Synod of Dordrecht. If the Rev. Knott imagines that in those days the controversy concerned statements that were thought literally heretical, without any explanation, he is sadly mistaken. Also the Arminians believed in election, the depravity of mankind, the total helplessness of man to be saved except by the grace of God. They too believed that faith is a gift of God and that regeneration is wrought by the Holy Spirit in the heart of the sinner. Yet our fathers condemned them. And they were right. And if the Rev. Knott and his former consistory want to discover that our fathers certainly did not refrain from arguing about the statements by the Arminians and explaining them, let him consult the Canons of Dordrecht and especially the Rejection of Errors, and he will discover that also in that controversy it certainly was a matter of statements that needed interpretation and explanation in the light of Scripture and the existing

Confessions, before the Synod could decide that they were *per se* heretical.

Thus it is always the case with the controversies in the church of Christ in the world.

And therefore, I claim that the stand of the Rev. Knott and his former consistory is absolutely unreasonable, and cannot be maintained in the light of history.

Only to one other item in this part of the reply of the former consistory to brother Meninga I will refer. I refer to the statement that "Classis ignored Rev. De Wolf's interpretation and isolated the statements from the context in which they appeared."

Neither of the members of this statement is correct. Classis did not ignore the interpretation by the Rev. De Wolf, although it did not agree with that interpretation. But I have reference especially to the second member of this particular sentence. It certainly is not true that the Classis simply isolated the statements from the context in which they appeared. This context was well-known to them from the protests. And from one of them I quote as follows:

"The sermon of April 15, 1951. On this date the Rev. De Wolf preached a sermon which I did not hear personally, but in which, according to the protests received by the Consistory, he spoke as follows:

"'God promises every one of you that, if you believe, you shall be saved.'

"'You have nothing to do with election and reprobation; your responsibility is to believe. If you will believe, you shall be saved.'

"This according to one of the protests. According to another, he said: 'Election and reprobation have nothing to do with the gospel.' The Rev. De Wolf denied having made these statements. And since there is a discrepancy between the two statements, and since there is no record of this sermon, the Consistory rules this out.

"Some of you carry Protestant Reformed on the lapel of your coat. You are proud of being Protestant Reformed. Don't think you go to heaven because you are Protestant Reformed.'

"These last statements the Rev. De Wolf never denied, although the Consistory did not consider them in the case. They wanted to concentrate on the first statement only."

However, the Classis knew this context. And although they too concentrated on the two statements, this does not mean that they simply isolated them from the context. In fact, the context makes the statements worse than they appear by themselves.

And as far as the second sermon is concerned, which I heard personally, in my first protest to the Consistory, which also was in the possession of the Classis, I stated as follows:

"My protest concerns three elements:

"1. The sermon contained no preaching of the gospel, except perhaps in the very last few sentences, which, however, had no organic connection with the body of the sermon,

but was rather loosely attached to it, as a sort of semi-Reformed appendix.

"2. The sermon struck an Arminian note, because:

"a. It exclusively emphasized in the body of the sermon conversion as the work of man.

"b. It presented conversion as the sole prerequisite which man must fulfill in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

"c. Because it spoke in a deprecating way of election: 'You can say that, if you are elect, you are in the kingdom,' etc. No truly Reformed man will ever strike such a note.

"3. The sermon was, for the above mentioned reasons, an example of modernistic preaching, since in the body of the sermon it had nothing but a lesson in humility, an admonition to shed our pride."

Hence, it is not true that the Classis isolated the statements and was ignorant of the context, or at least ignored it.

Nor is the very last sentence of this paragraph of the reply true. For indeed the Classis said that the statements were heretical, but they did not simply accept the interpretation of the protestants and proceed to judge on the basis of that interpretation. But the Classis discussed for days on end on the whole matter very thoroughly, as every one that was present will know and testify.

Further, the reply by the former Consistory of Kalamazoo to brother Meninga enters into the contents of the statements. And I quote:

"b. The statements:

"1) The first statement:

"a) The meaning of the word 'promise' as that of 'certification,' as Rev. De Wolf explained his meaning, is a perfectly legitimate usage, and it was an injustice to bind Rev. De Wolf to the meaning which the protestants maintained as the only possible meaning, namely, that it necessarily implies the loving purpose to bless with salvation.

"(Rev. Hoeksema himself has used the word in a different sense in the past. We read in his pamphlet 'The Curse-Reward of the Wicked Well-doer,' on p. 20, the following: 'Jehu also has his reward. For the Lord anointed him king and promised him that his children would sit on the throne of Israel even unto the fourth generation.')

My criticism is as follows:

1. Now the former Consistory of Kalamazoo isolates one word, "promise," from the rest of the sentence. In this way they attempt to justify the word "certification," as the proper meaning of the word *promise* in the statement of De Wolf. And they add that also I used that word in that same meaning with respect to Jehu, whom God promised that his children would sit on the throne of Israel even unto the fourth generation. But remember, in the case of Jehu the word *promise* certainly can be used in the sense of certification, because the promise was not the expression of the love of God to Jehu, but, as I explained in the pamphlet, simply

(Continued on page 60)

OUR DOCTRINE

THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

AN EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

PART III — OF THANKFULNESS

LORD'S DAY 43

Chapter 1

The Principle of the Ninth Commandment (cont.)

And with that power of imagination, though by itself it is a perfectly good power, given to us by God, I can nevertheless make representations in my own mind which are not in harmony with reality, with the reality of God, of the world, of Christ, of myself, and of the neighbor. And as soon as in our mind we make certain representations of that which is not reality, or of that which is directly contrary to reality and in conflict with it, and if I embrace those representations of my mind, cling to them, desire them and will them, and knowing that these representations are not reality but in conflict with it, and if then nevertheless I speak as if they were reality I am become a liar. The lie, therefore, is the perversion of a perfectly good power, the power of intellect and will, the power which God gave to a rational, moral creature, which by an act of his own will he subverted and corrupted.

Against this sin the ninth commandment is directed. The Catechism explains its positive as well as its negative aspect. The commandment directly forbids that we bear false witness against any man. And, as the Catechism explains, this implies that we do not corrupt or falsify or distort his words, that we be no backbiters or slanderers, that we do not judge or join in condemning any man rashly or unheard, so that we avoid all sorts of lies and deceit as the proper works of the devil, unless we would bring down upon us the heavy wrath of God. And positively, the Catechism explains that the ninth commandment demands that in judgment and in all other dealings I love the truth, speak it uprightly and confess it, and defend and promote as much as I am able the honor and good character of the neighbor.

The principle of the ninth commandment, therefore, is that God calls us to speak the truth in love, for His Name's sake, and to His glory, as well as for the love and well-being of the neighbor.

The opposite of this is the lie, or lying.

A lie is a willful misrepresentation of the truth. I emphasize that it is willful. Not every misrepresentation of the truth can be called a lie. We must remember that there are logical as well as moral misrepresentations of reality. The former are mistakes, or errors; the latter are lies. One can make a mistake in reasoning, so that the conclusion at which he arrives is not the truth. And when his attention is called

to his error, and he acknowledges it, he is not a liar. One can even make an error in such an exact science as mathematics. And also in that case the result is an untruth. But this is not what is meant by a lie. It is a mere mental, logical, not a moral offense. The lie is an ethical evil. To lie means very definitely that in your mind you have a clear representation of reality, so that you know what is the truth, while at the same time you produced by your own invention and imagination that which was contrary to the truth, and that now deliberately, for some reason or other, you hate and reject that which you know is the truth, and just as deliberately cling to that misrepresentation which you know to be in conflict with the truth, and in your speech represent it as the truth. That is why we say that the lie is a willful misrepresentation of the truth.

Let us note that the Heidelberg Catechism calls lying the very works of the devil. We may ask: why does the Catechism do this? In a sense, of course, all sin may be called the work of the devil. Yet, in connection with the sins against the other commandments the Catechism does not emphasize this as it does in connection with the sin against the ninth commandment. The answer to this question is that according to Scripture, and according to his very name, the devil is a slanderer and liar. Thus the Lord says in John 8:44: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." Lying, therefore, is emphatically the sin of the devil. And the principle of his sin is, according to Scripture, pride, self-exaltation. We know very little about the sin and the fall of Satan and his evil angels. But in the light of some passages of Holy Writ, it may safely be said that the principle of his sin was pride. Thus we read in I Timothy 3:6: "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Moreover, this is also plain from the very words by which he tempted our first parents in paradise to fall away from God. For in Gen. 3:4, 5 we read: "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be a gods (or: as God), knowing good and evil." That was the lie that already lived in the mind and heart of the devil himself. And that lie he now attempted to instill into the hearts of Adam and Eve. Hence, all sin is principally lying. And lying is principally motivated by pride and self-exaltation, first over against God, and then also over against the neighbor.

By listening to and embracing that first lie of the devil in paradise, we created a world of lies. If we read carefully what the Scriptures record about that first sin of Adam and Eve in paradise, we will discover that throughout it was based upon the principle of the lie. A lie was the first question which the devil put to Eve: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The idea of

this question was, of course, to instill into the mind of Eve the lie, that if there were no harm in eating of every tree of the garden, it certainly could not be wrong to eat of this particular tree. And although Eve answered very emphatically that she and Adam might eat of every tree of the garden except that which stood in the midst of the garden, of which, according to her, God has said, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die," the very emphasis of her words already reveals that principally she has surrendered to the lie of the devil. For the Lord had indeed said that they might not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but He never had said that they might not touch it. Secondly, having prepared in the mind and heart of Eve a way for his lie, he at once approaches her with the principal lie, that God really does not seek the good of His creature, and that therefore, if only they depart from Him and from His ways, they will attain to the highest good, and be like God. That, as we said, is the principle of the lie of the devil. And that principle is pride. He contradicts God, and slanders Him, and at the same time exalts himself above Him by making himself equal with God. Notice that here the devil instills into the mind of the woman and kindles in her imagination what is a complete misrepresentation of reality. Reality was the Word of God. That Word of God was: "Ye shall not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Reality was too that in the obedience to God's commandment lay the good of His rational, moral creature: only in that way could he live. Reality was that death and untold misery would be found in violating the Word of God. Such was reality. And the devil presents to the woman an entirely different world, a world in which the Word of God is the lie and in which not in obedience to the Word of God, but exactly in disobedience and disregard of the commandment of the Lord, lay the life and salvation of the creature. Those two representations of reality, the one true and the other false, the one by the Word of God and the other by the lie of the devil, Eve had before her mind. She certainly was able to distinguish them. The first sin was not a matter of mere confusion. She certainly knew that she would die in the way of the lie of the devil, and that she could live only by the Word of God that proceeded out of His mouth. But all sin, and also the first sin, was a matter of the will and of the heart. The temptation of the devil was calculated to take Eve's heart away from the love of the truth, with which she was created, and to have her choose the lie as desirable and preferable to the truth. And in this persuasion the devil evidently succeeded, for we read in Gen. 3:6: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." The tree, of course, was not good for food whatsoever: for man shall not live by bread alone, but by the Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. That it was pleasant and attractive to the eyes of Eve was not reality, but only true because the

lust of the flesh had already taken hold of her heart. And that it was a tree that was desirable because it could make one wise was a lie, because the Word of God had plainly informed her that in the way of eating of the tree she would die: and death is darkness and the folly of corruption.

Thus man became a sinner. And the sinner is a liar. And a liar is one that is filled with pride and exalts himself against the living God.

And as he is a liar, he necessarily is also a liar against the neighbor. As he does not love God, he cannot love the neighbor. And as he does not honor and love the name of God, so it is impossible for him to honor and love the neighbor's name. Principally he is a liar over against the neighbor as well as over against God.

Now, we repeatedly asserted that the principle of the ninth commandment, the positive principle, is that we speak the truth in love. In emphasizing this positive principle we have particularly in mind the word of Scripture in Ephesians 4:15: "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." And in connection with this verse we cite also verse 25: "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." And once more, we refer to verse 29 of the same chapter: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." This admonition is repeated several times in Holy Writ, as it is not necessary for us to point out at the present time.

Now in connection with Ephesians 4:15 there is a slight exegetical question, which, however, in connection with our use of the passage is of rather fundamental importance. The question, namely, is whether the phrase "in love" belongs to the preceding, "speaking the truth," or to the words that follow. If the latter interpretation is followed, the text then should read: "But that, speaking the truth, in love we may grow up into him in all things." We prefer, however, to choose the former interpretation, so that "in love" belongs to "speaking the truth." This is the most natural interpretation of the words, and certainly produces a very good sense.

By the truth here is undoubtedly meant the fundamental truth of the gospel, which the Ephesians had been taught, and which all believers embrace. It is the truth concerning the revelation of God as the God of our salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, and all that is implied in this gospel. Concerning this truth we may not be silent. It must be spoken. It must not only be preached by the church, but it must also be confessed by the members, before one another as well as before the whole world.

This must be done in love. Love is the principle of the whole law, and therefore also of the ninth commandment. And this love is always the love of God, a love which God

principally has to Himself, and in Christ Jesus our Lord also to us; which He works in our hearts so that we know that He loves us, and which also becomes a power within us whereby we realize our part of the covenant of God, so that we love Him with all our heart and mind and soul and strength. In that principle of love we also have the bond of fellowship with one another, so that we love the brethren. And it is by the power of that principle of the love of God, by which also we love the brethren, that we must speak the truth.

It stands to reason that only when we speak the truth in love, the truth, that is, of the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, the truth that God reconciled us unto Himself, not imputing our trespasses unto us, the truth that God realized by His Spirit and Word His sure promises unto us, so that we become new men in Christ Jesus our Lord, translated from darkness into light, that we also love and speak the truth in all things. From the principle of that fundamental truth follows that we obey the admonition which the apostle addresses to the church in Ephesus: "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." In the light of that truth and motivated by its principle, we can never lie against one another. For then we love the neighbor's name as well as our own, and we will seek the honor and good reputation of that name with all that is within us.

This then is the principle of the ninth commandment. Always we must speak the truth to and concerning one another in love.

It is well that we emphasize this phrase "in love." It is indeed very well possible that one speaks the truth concerning his neighbor, or even to his neighbor, from an entirely different motive than that of love. It is possible indeed to be entirely truthful, as far as the contents of our speech is concerned, to our brother, but with hatred and pride and vainglory in our hearts, for the purpose of hurting him and leading him to destruction. Such speech, however true it may be as far as the contents of it is concerned, is of the devil. And so it is possible also to speak the truth concerning the neighbor not in love, but in hatred, and to besmear his good reputation, and so make his position in the church, as well as in the world, impossible. In comparison with such speaking of the truth lying, although as such it must always be condemned and can never be justified, is nevertheless ethically preferable in certain cases. Of this we have several instances in Scripture. One of such cases is that of the Hebrew midwives in Egypt, Shiprah and Puah. The king commanded them, when they functioned as midwives in the birth of the Hebrew children, that they should keep only the daughters alive, but kill the infant sons. The midwives disobeyed the command of the king because they feared God. And when the king called them to account for their disobedience of his word, they explained this disobedience by a lie, and said: "Because the Hebrew

women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come unto them." Now this was, of course, a lie, quite contrary to the truth; and they were well aware of it. And the lie as such must be condemned. Perhaps it could be said that these Hebrew midwives lacked sufficient faith. They might have simply disobeyed the king without any refuge to the telling of an untruth. They might have had sufficient faith openly to refuse to obey the command of the king. Nevertheless, the motive of this lie was the fear of God and the love of God's people, and the purpose was to save the people of Israel alive. And it is evident that in this case God looked at the motive in the deepest heart of the midwives. For we read: "Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses." Exodus 1:15-21.

Another illustration of the same nature is that of Rahab the harlot. This too is well-known. It was reported to the king of Jericho that the two spies sent by Joshua to search out the land of Canaan had entered the house of Rahab. And the king demanded that these two spies should be delivered up unto him. But Rahab hid the men on the roof of her house. And when the messengers of the king came to her to inquire about them, she said: "There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them." Now this too was a lie; and as such it is undoubtedly to be condemned. Again, it may indeed be said that Rahab's faith was not strong enough openly to defy the king and to commit the rest unto the Lord. Nevertheless, it is not the lack of faith, or the weakness of the faith of Rahab, but her faith, by which she circumvented the king's commandment, and saved the people of God that had sought refuge in her house, which the Bible commends. For in Hebrews 11 we read: "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."

We insist that lies like those of Shiprah and Puah, the midwives of Egypt, and of Rahab the harlot are spiritually, ethically far to be preferred, also in the light of Holy Writ, above a speaking of the truth that is not motivated by the love of God and of the brethren, but rather by devilish hatred.

And therefore, the positive principle of the ninth commandment is that we always speak the truth, without compromising, without corruption, but then from the motive of the love of God and of the brethren, so that the word of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:29 is realized: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

H.H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Prophecy of Isaiah

Prophecies of the salvation of the church, beginning with the turning of Judah's captivity and concluding with the creation of the new heavens and the new earth. Isa. XI-LXVI.

Today the view that is held in broader circles is, that these chapters owe their origin to a prophet (or prophets) that flourished in or at the end of or even after the period (of the Babylonian captivity) of which these chapters treat — thus flourished some 225 years or more after the passing of Isaiah.

But till the end of the last century it was a universally accepted tradition among Jews and Christians that the chapters in question *were* prophetically written by Isaiah. This opinion, still retained by many, we are glad to say, is the only tenable one as can easily be seen in the light of the following considerations.

The chapters XL-LXVI form one book with the chapters I-XXXIX, where at 1:1 the superscription occurs, "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amos, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah."

As no passages occur in the prophetic discourse that with unquestionable clarity forbid our applying the superscription also to the chapters XL-LXVI, we find ourselves obliged to allow that the superscription does indeed apply also to these chapters.

The opinion that the superscription of 1:1 does not apply to the entire discourse, shuts us up to the impossible view — impossible because of the power and significance of the prophecies involved — either that the real author failed to supply these his prophecies with a superscription revealing his name and the time or age in which he flourished, or, if he did, that this superscription was either purposely omitted or accidentally lost in transmission.

Also to be considered is the argumentation of those who reject the traditional view and whose opinion it is that our chapters must be assigned to a nameless author of the period of the Babylonian exile.

It is said that the opinion that Isaiah "was carried forward by the Spirit, out of his own age to the standpoint of one hundred and fifty years later; that he was inspired to utter the warning and comfort required by a generation so very different from his own, involves a phenomenon without parallel in the history of Holy Scripture."

But this is not true. The experience of Isaiah was common to all the prophets. How otherwise should they have spoken the Word of God? All uttered glad predictions, good tidings, the Gospel of Christ, the reach of which extended to the end of time, thus tidings, words of comfort, instruction and warning required by the church of all the ages to come including the church of their own age. This was the very

purpose of prophecy. "Of which salvation," wrote the apostle "the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. *Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you . . .*" I Pet. 1:10-12a. Also their glad messages from the hope that God's believing people have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, Heb. 6:19.

That Isaiah was enabled to hail by name the deliverer, Cyrus, is said to involve another phenomenon without parallel in the history of Holy Scripture. It is true that the Cyrus-prophecy is found only in Isaiah. But it is not true that Isaiah's ability to hail this figure by name is without parallel in the history of Scripture. Christ was also hailed by name by Isaiah not alone but by all prophecy. If we only stand firmly in the faith that the *first* author of the prophetic discourse was the Lord, we will not stumble over the Cyrus-prophecy but will perceive its purpose and necessity. It must have been by this very prophecy, brought to the attention of Cyrus by Daniel, that the Lord moved him to set His people free.

There is also the argument that some chapters in our book are distinctly said to be by Isaiah while others are not so entitled, and that "this difference affords us sufficient ground for understanding, that the whole book is not necessarily by Isaiah, nor intentionally handed down by its compilers as the book of this prophet."

But let us get before us the facts. Of the 66 chapters of our book only the first two have superscriptions. Both name the prophet, Isaiah. In both he is presented to view as having seen the "word of God." All, including the moderns, are agreed that the "word" that the prophet saw includes more than the content of the chapter headed by the superscription. How then can it be said that *some* chapters of our book are distinctly said to be by Isaiah while others are not so entitled, meaning that the superscription covers the content only of the one chapter that it heads. The statement is untrue and the conclusion drawn from it worthless.

Both with the moderns and those who hold the traditional view, the questions are these: first, how many of the first 35 chapters of our book are to be included in the "Word of the Lord" that the prophet saw. Second, must Isa. XL-LXVI also be included in this "Word." The Moderns exclude several of the first 35 chapters and all of Isa. XL-LXVI. Their contention is that these chapters owe their origin not to Isaiah but to an unknown prophet (or prophets) who flourished at the close of or even after the Babylonian captivity, as has already been explained. Those who hold the traditional view include these chapters. As was said, their position is, that the superscriptions cover the entire discourse from beginning to end, with the exception of some parts of the historical section. The moderns have yet to prove this

position untenable. All they come with, in making the attempt, is doubtful reasonings and passages in the chapters involved that can have a meaning that differs from the one that they give to them.

A few more examples.

It is well known that in the New Testament, portion of the disputed chapters are quoted by Isaiah's name. This, too, pleads for the Isaian authorship of these chapters. But the Moderns deny this on the ground that none of these citations is by Christ Himself but by Paul and Matthew and the writer of the Acts, as if this could make any difference.

Also to be considered, they say, is the purpose of which the Evangelists borrow the texts. The purpose was not to answer the question, Did Isaiah write chapters XL-LXVI of the book called by his name. Nothing in the texts "requires us to suppose that Isaiah's name is mentioned with them for any other purpose (end) than that of reference, viz., to point out they lie in the part of the prophecy usually known by his name." That is, it is not necessary to suppose that their purpose was also to teach the Isaian authorship of our book. Hence, their quoting the texts by Isaiah's name in no wise pleads for the Isaian authorship of our book, of its disputed chapters.

This is a rather clever reasoning. But we want nothing of it. Seeing that the Evangelists and Paul were infallibly led in their writings by the Holy Spirit, how can it be supposed that they could be capable of quoting the texts by Isaiah's name, if it were true that the chapters in which they lie owe their origin to another unknown prophet?

But we have yet to consider what the Moderns regard as their unanswerable argument. As put into words by G. A. Smith (in "The Expositor's Bible") it runs like this, "It is nowhere said—as we should expect it to be said, if the prophecy had been uttered by Isaiah—that Assyria, the dominant world-power of Isaiah's day, was to disappear and Babylon to take her place; that then the Babylonians should lead the Jews into an exile which they had escaped at the hands of Assyria; and that after nearly seventy years of suffering God would raise up Cyrus as a deliverer. There is none of this prediction, which we might fairly have expected had the prophecy been Isaiah's; because, however far Isaiah carries us into the future, he never fails to start from the circumstances of his own day . . . In the statements, which our chapters make concerning the Exile and the conditions of Israel under it, there is no prediction, not the slightest trace of the grammar of the future in which Jeremiah's prophecies are constantly uttered. But there is a direct appeal to the conscience of a people already long under the discipline of God; their circumstance of exile is taken for granted; there is a most vivid and delicate appreciation of their present fears and doubts, and to these the deliverer Cyrus is not only named, but introduced as an actual and notorious personage already upon the midway of his irresistible career." — End of quote.

We should consider that the only reason that the Moderns

argue this way is, that they refuse to adopt the only tenable, let us say, permissible position that the "Word of the Lord" that Isaiah saw, 1:1, includes also Isa. XL-LXVI, and that therefore also these chapters owe their origin to him. If it is true, and it is true, as we purpose to show in the sequel, that this position is the only permissible one, then of course the disputed chapters are prediction throughout, also those passages where the grammar is of the past. Then it is said also in these disputed chapters that Assyria was to disappear and Babylon to take her place, etc. G.M.O.

BECAUSE IT'S AUTUMN

From my window, by the morning light,
Seeing the last star fade from night,
I thank my God for His gift of sight
Because it's autumn.

Watching the sunrise slowly appear,
I glory in the colors of the heavenly sphere
That slowly fade and flee as in fear
Because it's autumn.

The air of the morning, so brisk and clear
Carries all sound, for one may hear
The call of each bird that brings his cheer;
Because it's autumn.

The trees, resplendent in their glory now,
Took all the life from each leaf-crowned bough
And gave colors instead (I know not how),
Because it's autumn.

Most of the leaves, fallen upon the ground
Swirl and rustle in an attempt to sound
The glory of God, His wisdom profound —
Because it's autumn.

Along the curbs, on the way to town
The leaves scamper along: red, yellow and brown;
Thus Nature is dressed in her beautiful gown,
Because it's autumn.

The trees, nearly naked, lift their arms to the sky
And, whispering weird stories, murmur and sigh
That these are signs of a rest, that winter is nigh
Because it's autumn.

Over the hazy October breeze
Comes the pungent smell of burning leaves,
Its way between houses and bushes, it weaves;
Because it's autumn.

The fires die out; the embers still glowing
Shine out in the darkness. The full moon is showing
The earth in her slumber, the rivers still flowing
Because it's autumn.

'Tis the end of the season but I know He'll restore
All the beauty of it again from shore to shore
To tell all His people, that they may adore
Him in His beautiful autumn!

H.J.K.

FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition Of II Timothy 2:21-26

There is a veritable treasury, a wealth of good advice in the Pastoral letters of Paul. Did God ever prepare a better "earthen vessel" to give such advice? Has ever a man so labored as did this Apostle to the Gentiles? And could anyone give such good counsel to a young preacher, who must stand in the office of Christ as a "servant of the Lord?"

God's people, in general, surely must be prepared and thoroughly equipped unto every good work of love, faith, righteousness and patience. Their calling is that they may let their light shine before men in order that our Father in heaven may be glorified. But a minister of the Gospel surely must be prepared unto the Ministry. And then a great share of this preparation is, no doubt, what we might call *Practical Theology*. He must not simply know what to preach and how to make a sermon, but he must know in what spiritual attitude of mind and heart he must labor, and very really be a *servant* of the Lord, fit for the Master's (Despot's) use. For any servant, who does not really live and act the part of a *servant* of Christ acts the part of a "lord," a despot, and such a one the great "Despot" will have slain before the eyes of all. Wherefore, let not a "servant" act the part of a Lord. He must be minister, doer of little things, rather than be a Dominus! He must rule well without exercising dominion over God's heritage!

Hence, the admonition of Paul in II Timothy 2:21, "*Wherefore, if anyone cleanse himself from these he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, beautifully useful, in a fit state of being ready for all good work.*"

The reader will notice that this is a rather free rendering of the text. But it brings out the fine and delicate coloring of the Apostle's admonition to Timothy and to all ministers!

What a servant of the Lord he is, who is (euchreeston toi despotee) beautifully-useful unto the Ruler and Owner of the Church!

This has special implications for a young minister, and it has something also to say to those who are older, since no man becomes so old that he has "lost all of the boy" in him. Paul warns Timothy against "youthful lusts." What Paul has here in mind is quite likely the "youthful lusts" of waging wars, of not being wholly mindful, that except the Lord build the city, vainly do the builders build, and except the Lord keep the watch, vainly do the watchmen keep the watch! It is sometimes said, that wisdom comes with the years! I once met an old minister of more than four-score years of age, and in the course of my conversation with him he must have detected the "youthful lusts" of impatience in me, and said in a very kindly way: "Patience is the word, young man, patience is the word." There is a strange contradiction in us often. We are very certain that the sure foundation of God stands having the twofold seal, namely, that the Lord

knows who are His, and that everyone who names the name of Christ must depart from iniquity, while at the same time we fret and fume, while we labor, as if it all depended on our vehemence and giving vent to our strong feelings of impatience.

These are the lusts, characteristic of a young preacher, from which we *must flee!*

The only way in which a man can flee from these youthful lusts is to pursue "righteousness, faith, love, peace with all who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart!" When this is done by a preacher, or any other brother or sister in God's church, he will be fit for the master use. He will have a good and just cause to champion. He will be preaching and teaching as one walking in sanctification, in cleanliness of heart, and will thus be beautifully useful unto the Lord of lords and the King of kings. He will be concerned about essentials and not about trivials; he will walk as before the very face of God. With his whole being he will seek righteousness, as the blessed who hunger and thirst after the righteousness of the Kingdom of heaven. Wreck and ruin will not be in his wake. He will not be as those who have no fear of God before their eyes, and who know not the way of peace, and who will surely one day stand speechless before the Despotees of heaven and earth! Always the issue is: is it a question of *faith*, is it a matter of that faith by which we are justified without works of *law* which we perform, and is it a question of that faith from which all good works spring forth as from a fountain? And thus it will surely also always be a question of *love*, which is the fulfilment of the law of God. And not least will it be a pursuing of "peace" as this is rooted in righteousness, faith and love! When we thus *pursue* peace it is not a peace at any price, but it is a peace which is ours in the Great Price of Christ's blood; it is the peace that is pursued in the rock-bottom assurance that the foundation of God, manifested as standing immovable in the Blood, calls for a departing from all unrighteousness also in the preacher. It was this sense of the narrow path which a preacher must "pursue" that caused Paul to say, "lest I be accounted a castaway!" What a dreadful reality to have been a "herald" of the new day to others and then be accounted a reprobated one (adokimos) by the Despotees, the Lord of lords, who will judge both the living and the dead in His glorious appearance! And, yet, how glorious to be beautifully-useful unto the Despotees.

Such a minister, a servant of the Lord, must in every sense be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

A Minister must not be the pathetic spectacle of being an alleged man "beautifully-useful" in Christ's church, and, yet, full of "lusts warring in his members" (James 4:1-5) so that he *gives birth* to warfare and strifes in his flock. Then all real usefulness of a minister is gone. He has fallen into the snares of the Devil. He cannot thus save himself and those who hear him.

Many a minister has actually fallen into this snare of the Devil with those who hear him. As big as he is alive he

rushed into foolish and unedifying questions of debate. And ere such a minister knows it he is not walking in the mildness, gentleness and the affableness required in a servant of the Lord, but he lays the whip-lash of a sharp tongue on the flock of God. The very place where peace in Christ must be nurtured becomes the womb and birth-place of fightings! He is not beautifully-useful for the Lord of lords and the King of kings. It is not sufficient to him to be as his Master, meek, gentle, apt to teach. He has lost spiritual contact with his Master, and is a prey of Satan having been taken captive alive (zoogreoo)!

The temptation is especially great when a minister has to deal with people in the church who oppose the teaching which is unto godliness. When a minister begins to feel pity for himself rather than for these members in the church who do not repent unto the thorough knowledge of the truth, then a minister stands before a very real and dangerous pitfall in his ministry; if he does not very strongly live in the consciousness that he is a *servant*, a slave of the Lord, who can only do the work assigned to him. He has no choice but to be a good servant, he must remember. He must be able to psycho-analyse the spiritual condition of such people, who seem to oppose him, the servant. In great pity and gentleness of spirit he must be able to bear in mind the fact that these individuals do not resist him, the preacher, but that they are *opposing themselves*. They are great victims of their *own sin*. They are in need of help. No, not first of all in need of the help of man, but in need of the *efficacious grace* of God. They are in need of real and genuine *repentance*.

But when this plight of the members is not seen in its true nature and perspective then a minister no longer teaches them, and bears with the evil he experiences from them. Then he no longer is willing to die that they might live. He begins to complain about the evil done him. He is then a very poor servant of the Lord, not at all beautifully-useful for the Lord of His church! He is not a servant who shows the form of Christ in Him. He does not treat these members as he would wanted to be treated in like circumstances. He does not fulfill the Golden Rule to them. Since he is not really sober and in his right senses toward them he cannot be instrumental in bringing them to their right senses.

However, when a minister (and elders) sees the real plight of those who *oppose themselves* he will be very gentle toward them; he will take a lot of abuse. He will not say as modern psychiatrists allege that such people are not responsible; the responsibility of such stands. But he will bear with them and in the good sense pray: Father, forgive them for they are not really spiritually sober; Father, bring them to their senses, grant them Thy grace that they may return to a sound mind spiritually, to their sober senses. Liberate them from all the beclouding influences and all the bewilderment of sin. Grant them to have true wariness against all spiritual dangers and bewilderment, for they are taken captive by the snares of the Devil.

But if this we do, as Ministers, then for the very life's

sake of the bewildered, self-opposing members in the church we will not contend with them. Our conduct and speech will not be in the "atmosphere" of combatants at war with one another. "Now a servant of the Lord must not contend." He must not be dragged into the "contention" of such souls. They are often bewildered with many contentious questions, which are of such a nature that they have nothing to do with edification in Christ Jesus, with sound words of doctrine. All words about law and genealogies are to no profit; and all insistence on works of law are to no profit. The only word that edifies is the sure foundation of God, which stands! This foundation has this seal: the Lord knows who are His own (elective grace) and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity (sanctification as fruit of election). The only edifying words are those of God's love and what we are to do by virtue of this sovereign love of God. All other words are simply foolish and vain questions, which because they do not satisfy and edify are questions from which strife is borne.

A minister must, therefore, always teach. And he must be in the spiritual-psychological frame of mind to teach. He must always sow, looking to God for the increase. He must do this in the face of all hardships and evils that attend this world. This will require incessant prayer. But he is a servant of the Lord. And his calling is to pray even as did Jesus, Who prayed whole nights. How abundantly the epistles of Paul testify of his life of prayer in his labors and sufferings abundant. He does so knowing that the Lord knows who are His own. Paul does not know these. So he preaches and teaches if peradventure God give repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth.

And then, if our life must be poured out as a drink-offering before the Lord, we will still say that the lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places. A servant of the Lord looks for the reward of grace in the ages to come, when his joy shall be mingled with the church, even with those who once resisted themselves, in that day when the great Despot-ees, Lord, the righteous Judge shall judge the living and the dead!

G.L.

A PROTEST AND ITS REPLY

(Continued from page 53)

an expression of His hatred against that wicked king, so that he received the curse-reward of the wicked well-doer.

2. But this certainly cannot be the meaning of the word *promise* in the statement of the Rev. De Wolf, for the simple reason that according to that statement God promised every one in the audience that he shall be saved; and the promise of salvation, although it includes certification, assurance, on the part of God, is always an expression of His love to His people. Hence, the former Consistory of Kalamazoo blunders when it takes the word *promise* out of the connection with the entire statement. To promise salvation is to certify salvation from the motive of the love of God; never anything else.

H.H.

IN HIS FEAR

Shameful And Revealing

Our attention was called by more than one defender of conditional theology and of the Schism of '53 to a statement in our September 15 contribution to this department. Since these parties were of the opinion that we had done Classis West (she was Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches yet at that time) a great injustice by accusing her of something of which they thought she was entirely innocent, we promised to make a correction and explanation at this time.

Our statement was in error, not because the thing of which we accused Classis West did not take place, but because we failed to express it fully and to explain our statement, so that we thereby left a wrong impression.

Let the readers judge whether our accusation was unjust and whether our statement, though as it stands it is in error, does not still put Classis West in a *more* favorable light than what the facts warrant. Our explanation of what we had in mind will show a greater corruption and misbehaviour than would have been revealed had our statement not been challenged.

The statement in question was that Classis West denied the Rev. Hoeksema advisory vote at one of its sessions. Now the minutes of Classis West of September 5, 1951 read, "Art. 7. Advisory vote is again given to Revs. H. Hoeksema and G. M. Ophoff." And so it can be seen that at that September session and at the March session of that year, they were given advisory vote.

And yet we continue to maintain our former statement, however, with this qualification: Classis West in word and by motion did give the Rev. H. Hoeksema advisory vote at the March 1951 session, as the minutes show; and yet they took it away from him in deed and by vote later in the session upon a very vital and important matter. In the minute book it may all look quite innocent, and yet the facts are such that what actually took place, and is not so evident from the bare minutes, shows more glaringly and more to the shame of the constituency of that Classis than our statement, that then already in 1951 these men had little use for the Rev. H. Hoeksema and did not want his advice on doctrinal matters given to the delegates of the Classis. Though he was the professor in Dogmatics in our Seminary at that time as well as still today.

You see, the whole matter has to do with the Declaration of Principles which was being discussed at that classical session; and the author of the motion which shut Rev. Hoeksema's mouth had already in January of that year published his intention to "oppose" the Declaration. Here was one of the many ways in which those who wanted to open the doors of our churches to the Liberated worked to seek to have the

Declaration — which was drawn up to safeguard our churches against the arminian conditional theology of the Liberated — defeated. That was the thing which we had in mind when we wrote that Classis West denied the Rev. H. Hoeksema advisory vote.

Let us explain the matter further, and let the reader judge whether we said too much about Classis West.

Rev. De Jonge had read his protest against the Declaration. And in it he had given several quotations from the late Dr. Schilder's articles in the *Reformatie* wherein he condemned our Declaration on *doctrinal* grounds and wherein he found fault with the Rev. H. Hoeksema's doctrinal position. For to a great extent Dr. Schilder did make it the personal matter of a debate between himself and the Rev. H. Hoeksema on their doctrinal views. At any rate the Rev. H. Hoeksema's name and doctrinal position were mentioned in those quotations which Rev. De Jonge read. The Rev. Hoeksema was assured that the first thing the next morning he would be given the floor to answer these accusations. And the Classis knew that he intended to prepare himself that night to give answer the next morning.

And now that we are forced to drag out into the open what we would like to forget and to hide from those who did not know it, we must explain that before he could open his mouth the next morning to defend himself and the Declaration, one who before the classical sessions ever began had written his intention to oppose the Declaration managed to shut the Rev. Hoeksema's mouth by a motion, so that this part of the propaganda to seek the defeat of the Declaration was never answered at that session of Classis.

The matter was talked over that night and surely thought over that night by others than the Rev. H. Hoeksema. For before he could have the opportunity to defend himself as assured by the Classis, a motion was quickly introduced to declare that part of Rev. De Jonge's protest out of order. When that motion passed, Classis West denied the Rev. H. Hoeksema advisory vote on that important matter.

Clever maneuvering!

But who dares to say that in 1951 already it was not a doctrinal issue?

And why might the delegates not hear the defense of that doctrinal part of the Declaration even if what was read to seek its defeat was irrelevant?

Why did they not stop Rev. De Jonge when he began to read such irrelevant, "out of order" material? And now that it was read and made its impression on the delegates, why must that impression be left? Common decency would have demanded that they give the Rev. H. Hoeksema the right to defend himself, and interest in the Protestant Reformed truth over against the arminian conditional theology of the late Dr. Schilder and of the Liberated would have allowed such a defense. One may make a censurable remark on the floor of Classis in a way that is definitely out of order. One may blurt out a foul accusation while another speaker is busy talking. Does anyone deny that though it was spoken out

of order and though it lies in the nature of the case that it is irrelevant to the case being discussed, the president is not in duty bound to rebuke that individual?

111 Nor is that all.

After this shameful treatment the Sept. session of that same Classis had to deliberate for twenty to thirty minutes as to whether they will give advisory vote to men who are given it automatically at the sessions of the Synod by the rules of Synod, because they are professors in our Theological School. And the matter being treated was, once again, the Declaration!

Were there not a cloud in the sky. Were our churches going through a normal period of ecclesiastical life, such a thing would not have happened. And if it had, one would not be so upset by such shameful treatment. But when our churches are going through the stress and testing of adopting a matter which was so widely debated and discussed as the Declaration, why should the advice of the professors in the Theological School not be eagerly sought and advisory vote be given without discussion? How all this evil work in 1951 points to September, 1953!

And how all this evil work also puts the lie to Rev. De Wolf's wicked and unchristian cross bill to which he swore before God. When such things occur in your denomination, you hardly call the *victim* of such evil work a domineering character, do you? Especially when one so evilly treated lets the matter drop without himself writing one word about it! And he is not the source of our information about these things either. There were others there who were not personally, nor even by blood or marriage ties involved in this shameful work, who were made sick at heart because they witnessed this shameful treatment. And some still stumble over it that after such shameful treatment the Rev. H. Hoeksema walked out of the meeting! But Rev. De Wolf, before God confess your evil cross bill to be the lie. He did not stay there to try to domineer any one of those two meetings of Classis West in 1951. His attitude even after this shameful treatment was anything but that of trying to "rule or ruin" as your oath before GOD states. How can you have peace with God after you swore before Him to all this corruption and plain slander?

112 Or does your evil cross bill point back to *this* case when you swore in it before God?, "That cross defendant Herman Hoeksema is unable to control the actions of Classis West and that substantially all of the congregations of Classis West are not in harmony with him and that he has lost control over Classis West." But where, then, does your charge of a domineering character that will "rule or ruin" fit in? And you continue in your oath before God, "That for the purpose of carrying out the conspiracy to get control of the various properties of the various church congregations and to dictate the policies of these churches, the said Herman Hoeksema has recently made visits to the locations where the churches of Classis West are located and there has attempted to create and in some instances has created schisms in said

churches, and has attempted to split the congregations and organize new congregations over which he could have control . . .". You swore that *before* God, Rev. De Wolf, now go and tell it *to* Him, if you dare. Try to convince Him of it, if you can. Try to convince Him that he went there in a "conspiracy to get control of the various properties." Why did he not go for the property of Pella and Oskaloosa?

One of those who accused us of doing Classis West injustice told us that we did not need to correct this "error" for his sake, but that it would look better for the undersigned in the day of judgment, if he did. Will he now exercise his own brother-in-law love over Rev. De Wolf (as we suggested to him in a personal letter) and urge him to confess publicly his most grievous error in that cross bill? Let him ask Rev. De Wolf whether he wants to appear before The Judge of heaven and earth with that cross bill in his hands. Let him ask *himself* whether he wants to appear there with the Scriptures and our Church Order, which is based upon the Scripture, in one hand and the decisions of Classis West, September 1953 in the other hand. No one yet has produced, in answer to our challenge, one authority on Reformed Church Polity who will dare to maintain that Reformed Church Polity allows and prescribes such actions as was perpetrated in September, 1953 by those who now falsely call themselves the Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Let him write Rev. Kok and ask him whether it will not look better for him to read carefully past Standard Bearer editions with the view to doing the Rev. Hoeksema and the Rev. Ophoff justice, rather than to see how much he can confuse men with deliberate omissions of their writings and coupling together of things that these men would never couple together in their writings. Let him ask Rev. Kok whether it will not look better for him before The Judge of heaven and earth to confess now that he has done them a gross injustice and deceived many of God's children by his evil practices. Let him read and reread and tell Rev. Kok to read and reread the two fine articles in the October 15 issue wherein the evil way in which Rev. Kok quotes is exposed! Let them note carefully how Rev. Kok deliberately leaves out those sentences in the midst of a paragraph because it would overthrow his whole argument for which he quotes part of this paragraph. It is hard for us to believe that Rev. Kok would stoop to such low things. But there it is time and again! What we say and write to him has no positive effect. Let those who attacked the undersigned write Rev. Kok and urge him to reconsider this whole case In His Fear. J.A.H.

Announcement

The Eastern League of Men's Societies will hold their Membership meeting November 11, at 8 o'clock in the Hope Protestant Reformed Church. Rev. M. Schipper will speak. Topic: "Earmarks of the True and False Church."

— The Board.

Contending For The Faith

The Church and the Sacraments

EARLY VIEWS ON THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

(Continued)

We were discussing in our previous article the idea of the sacrament as entertained by the early Church Fathers during the first three centuries of the Church of God in the New Dispensation; and we were about to quote from Cyprian to show that this Church Father used the term "sacrament," with respect to prayer and the Trinity. This quotation now follows from his explanation of the Lord's Prayer: "And in discharging the duties of prayer, we find that the three children with Daniel, being strong in faith and victorious in captivity, observed the third, sixth, and ninth hours, as it were, for a sacrament of the Trinity, which in the last times had to be manifested. For both the first hour in its progress to the third shows forth the consummated number of the Trinity, and also the fourth proceeding to the sixth declares another Trinity; and when from the seventh to the ninth is completed, the perfect Trinity is numbered every three hours, which spaces of hours the worshippers of God in times past having spiritually decided on, made use of for determined and lawful times for prayer. And subsequently was manifested, that these things were of old Sacraments, in that anciently righteous men prayed in this manner. For upon the disciples at the third hour the Holy Spirit descended who fulfilled the grace of the Lord's promise. Moreover, at the sixth hour, Peter, going up unto the house-top, was instructed as well by the sign as by the word of God admonishing him to receive all of the grace of salvation, whereas he was previously doubtful of the receiving of the Gentiles to baptism. And from the sixth hour to the ninth, the Lord, being crucified, washed away our sins by His blood; and that He might redeem and quicken us, He then accomplished His victory by His passion. But for us, beloved brethren, besides the hours of prayer observed of old, both the times and the sacraments have now increased in number. For we must also pray in the morning, that the Lord's resurrection may be celebrated by morning prayer."—end of quote. It appears from this quotation that the early Church Father, Cyprian, used the words: sacrament and mystery, not only with respect to Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but to the Trinity, the Lord's Prayer, religion, etc. And this applies to the other Church Fathers also.

VIEWS CONCERNING THE CHURCH AND THE SACRAMENTS DURING THE SECOND PERIOD 300-750 A.D.

THE CHURCH

External growth characteristic of the Church during this period.

Having concluded our discussion of the history of the doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments during the first three centuries of the Church of God in the New Dispensation, we now proceed to discuss the history of this doctrine as it was developed in the second period of the Church, during the years, 300-750.

This period, to which we now will call attention, is a period of tremendous significance for the Church of God. It follows upon what is known in Church History as "The Heroic Age," embracing the first three centuries of the New Dispensation and characterized by several terrible and bloody persecutions of the Church of God and Cause of Christ in the midst of the world. Many of us are more or less familiar with this bloody period of the Church of God. Desperately the devil attempted to destroy the Church of Christ in the midst of the world, and we are reminded of this trying period in a passage such as Rev. 12:12-17, and we quote: "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."—end of quote. The Roman Empire put forth countless and relentless efforts to obliterate the Name of Christ and His Church from under heaven. And the Church of the living God was compelled to hold fast that which it has in order that no man might take its crown.—see Rev. 3:11. These persecutions, however, came to an end in the years, 311 and 313. The wicked world had spent and exhausted itself in its wicked but utterly foolish and vain attempt to destroy the Cause of the living God. Besides, the beginning of this age is highlighted by the reign of Constantine the Great to whom we will call attention presently somewhat in detail.

This period of the Church, we have already observed, is a period of tremendous significance for the Church of the

living God. Having successfully withstood the onslaught of the forces of hell from without, the Church was now compelled to battle for its life against the attacks of the forces of evil from within. And this latter type of warfare is fully as difficult for the Church of God as to resist the forces of evil from without. The period of rest and tranquility which set in the years, 311-313, also gave the enemies of the truth an opportunity to operate within the Church and to undermine the very foundations of the Church of God. From 325 to 451 A.D. several ecumenical (world-wide) church councils were held, beginning with what is generally regarded as the most important of all Church councils, the Council of Nicaea, in the year, 325. It was during this period that the Church of God experienced the Arian and Semi-Arian controversies. Arius denied the Godhead of the Christ. The Church, however, repudiated this heresy, established the Scriptural truth of the Trinity, declaring that the three Persons; Father-Son-Holy Spirit, are coeternal and coequal. Later, in 451, the Church declared itself on the union of the two natures in the one Divine Person of the Son. We need not at this time call attention to these several controversies in detail, although I am sure that we realize that it is exactly during these early centuries of the New Dispensation that the groundwork was laid for the development of the truth throughout the ages.

The external development of the Church in power and glory can never be divorced from the reign of one of the most famous of all emperors, Constantine the Great, and from the famous Edict of Milan in the year, 313. Two years prior to this Edict of Milan Emperor Galerius had called a halt to the persecutions of the Christians. The years, 303-311, had witnessed what is regarded as the severest and most diabolical of all persecutions, the persecution under the emperors, Diocletian and Galerius. The tortures which were inflicted upon the Christians during this persecution were so gruesome, we are informed, that it is not fit to describe them. Church buildings were ruthlessly destroyed. Bibles were burned. These persecutions far surpassed, in the number of Christians who were tortured and martyred in unbelievable cruelty, anything the Christians had been compelled to suffer until this time. Indeed, these persecutions were a fanatic and desperate attempt by the forces of darkness and of hell to uproot the cause of Christ and Christianity and completely wipe the Church of God from off the face of the earth. An outstanding Christian who died a martyr's death during these persecutions was Cyprian to whom we have referred repeatedly in past articles. Origin also died as the result of tortures inflicted upon him during this time. This last great imperial (under the decree and direction of the emperors) persecution under Diocletian and Galerius, which was aimed at the complete uprooting of the new religion, ended with the Edict of Toleration of 311 and the tragical ruin of the persecutors. Diocletian had withdrawn himself from the throne in 305, and in 313 put an end to this embittered life by suicide. In his retirement he found more pleasure in

raising cabbage than he found in ruling the empire, a confession which we may readily believe to be true (President Lincoln had said once during the Civil War that he would gladly exchange his position with that of any common soldier in the tented field). Emperor Galerius became ill and suffered unspeakable torments, reminding us of what the Scriptures inform us concerning Herod in Acts 12:21-23. His body, we are informed, swelled by an intemperate course of life to an unwieldy corpulence, was covered with ulcers and devoured by innumerable swarms of those insects which have given their name to a most loathsome disease. From his sick-bed, which became his deathbed, he issued in the year, 311, an edict which granted to the Christians permission to hold their assemblies again. He asked for their prayers in behalf of the emperor and the Empire. This edict of Galerius was not a complete victory for the Church of God. It was merely a half-hearted toleration. However, it was nevertheless an involuntary and irresistible concession of the incurable impotence and powerlessness of heathenism and of the indestructible power of Christianity. This must be a self-evident fact. Humanly speaking, what chances of survival did the Cause of Christ have when it was launched by the resurrected and glorified Christ in the midst of the heathen world? What chance of survival did the Church of God have over against the mighty heathen world-powers of that time? Indeed, the odds were overwhelmingly and hopelessly against the Church of the living God. The powers of darkness had at their disposal all the power and might and glory of this present world whereas the Church of the living God was the picture of utter helplessness. It is surely true that the wisdom of this world was made folly and the power of this world weakness by the alone living God. For some three centuries the powers of hell had waged relentless persecutions against the Church and the Cause of Christ. Heathendom had finally exhausted its strength and spent its fury. Scripture had once more been vindicated that the gates of hell will not overwhelm the Church of God. The Church of God is indestructible because it is the work of God. The powers of darkness can kill the body but not the soul. God's work continues throughout the ages. This Edict of 311 was followed, two years later, by an edict issued by Constantine the Great, and called the Edict of Milan. However, we will call attention to this Constantine the Great and his Edict of Milan in a subsequent article.

H.V.



LORD, HEAR THE RIGHT, REGARD MY CRY

Lord, hear the right, regard my cry,
My prayer from lips sincere;
Send Thy approval from on high,
My righteousness make clear.
Thou in the night my heart hast tried,
Nor found it turned from Thee aside.

Psalms 17:1

The Voice of Our Fathers

The Canons of Dordrecht

PART TWO

EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

FIRST HEAD OF DOCTRINE

OF DIVINE PREDESTINATION

Article 13 (continued)

Our fathers insist here that the sense and certainty of this eternal and unchangeable election results in the very opposite of carnal security and moral laxity. Positively, they maintain that it bears fruit, first of all, in that the elect humble themselves before God. This is indeed worthy of special notice. Frequently it is claimed that the Reformed doctrine of election is a proud doctrine, that it makes the elect conceited, and causes them to assume a haughty and I-am-holier-than-thou attitude towards the reprobate and ungodly, as if they have something to boast of themselves that God has chosen them and not someone else. But we should understand that this is not an objection than can be launched against the doctrine of *sovereign* predestination at all. And when this charge is brought, it can only be due to the grossest ignorance of the truth, or to the evil and malicious conscience of the adversary of this truth, who, in the realization that his own heretical doctrine is chargeable with this very fault, throws a smokescreen by levelling this accusation against the truth. This is a very common phenomenon in the battle for the truth, that heretics seek to calumniate the truth with the very faults which characterize their own false doctrine. Here too, the Reformed truth of election is not a proud doctrine, and does not foster pride in the elect; but the Arminian heresy concerning election is a proud doctrine essentially, and fosters pride. This lies in the very nature of the case. The truth of a sovereign and free election exactly excludes all carnal boasting. It necessarily includes the profession of our own unworthiness and sin. It necessitates the confession that God's grace is *sovereign*, and that God did not choose us on account of our own works in any sense of the word. This leads to true smallness before God. It cuts a man down to size. And what is man's size? "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket ("of a bucket," not, "in a bucket"), and are counted as the small dust of the balance . . . All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Isa. 40:15, 17. And true humility is the deep and heartfelt realization of our "nothingness" in relation to the sovereign Lord. To this humility Arminian doctrine can never lead, because it maintains that the creature, yea, the sinner, is after all something, not nothing, in relation to God.

Secondly, the sense and certainty of their election, according to this article, results in the elect adoring the depth of God's mercies. This stands in close connection with the fruit of humility. For God's mercy is that divine virtue according to which He eternally wills to bless His people as they are in misery. That mercy we behold in all its depth when we stand before the truth of sovereign predestination. O, to be sure, that mercy we behold in all the blessings of salvation, in the gift of God's Son, in His cross, in His resurrection, and in all the operations of the Spirit of Christ whereby the blessings of Christ are applied to us, so that we taste it in our lives. But the one question which we ponder in all these manifestations of God's mercy remains: *why?* Why Christ? Why the cross? Why forgiveness? Why sanctification? Why preservation? Why glory? Why for me, a poor, miserable, all unworthy and sinful creature of the dust? That question presses in upon the mind and heart of the child of God with ever greater insistence according as the consciousness of his own misery deepens. And there is but one answer to that question. That answer, the solution, is not to be found in you and me. Rightly considered, it is not to be found in Christ and His atoning work: for even then the question remains, "Why Christ?" The answer is: God and His eternal and unchangeable and sovereign purpose of election. In other words,—if we may speak of the "measure" of God's mercy,—the measure of His mercy is eternal and infinite. Before it the child of God can only stand in awe and be filled with adoration and inexpressible delight. According, therefore, as the knowledge of our misery deepens, our adoration of the depth of God's mercy, originating in eternal election and through which alone we are saved, also deepens.

In the third place, the fruit of the sense and certainly of our election is that the children of God find in it daily more reason for purifying themselves, cleansing themselves "from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit." It may safely be said that there is no greater reason and incentive for a sanctified life than in the truth of election as it is personally appropriated by God's children. For do not forget that God has chosen us for the very purpose that "we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:4. Such is the divine purpose of election. And that purpose, of course, cannot be thwarted: God always fulfills His purpose. Nor is it an arbitrary matter that God has chosen us unto *holiness*. For God is the Holy One in Himself. And it is His eternal purpose that His people should be to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. Eph. 1:5, 6. If then His elect are to be to the praise of the glory of His grace, then that grace must be and is of such a nature that it sanctifies, cleanses, and makes holy its elect objects. Contemplating that grace, His elect people, in the sense and certainty of *that* election, and election unto holiness), take as their own purpose and striving sanctification, that is, walking in a new and holy life. The holy purpose of the electing God becomes the purpose and striving of the

elect people. Principally they can never say, "God's purpose may be holiness, but we do not care to walk in newness of life." Principally they always say: "How ought we also to walk holily and to strive for sanctification of life before the face of the holy God that has chosen us."

In the fourth place, this article mentions as one of the fruits of the assurance of our election "ardently loving him in turn, who has so greatly first loved them." Concerning this we may note, first of all, that "loving God in turn," as the *Canons* have it, is certainly not a love that is independent of God's love to us, so that even in smallest measure the elect ever remunerate God for His love by loving Him in turn. No, this reciprocating love is never anything else than the reflection of and the response to His own love toward us as it is shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit of Christ. Secondly, we must remember that these ardent returns of love, while they first of all find expression in our direct love of and service of God Himself, necessarily include the manifestation of a true love of the brethren and of the neighbor. To love God and not the neighbor is impossible. And the idea here is that experiencing the love of God, exactly as a *first* love and as an *unspeakably great* love, and contemplating that love of God, the elect are incited to respond by their love in Him.

Such is the picture of the elect child of God who has attained the personal assurance of election.

Just a few observations must be made yet in this connection.

First of all, we must by no means get the impression that God's elect are perfect or near-perfect in this life. This is not the case. And the elect themselves would be the first to acknowledge it. Nor do the *Canons* leave this impression: for they plainly speak of a certain *progress* in humility, in adoration, in cleansing, and in love. And where perfection is attained, progress is no more possible.

In the second place, we must remember that what the *Canons* here present is no mere moralistic religion. It is true that the relation as it is here presented is one of "daily drawing more material" for humility, adoration, etc. It is true that the fathers speak of the "meditation" or "contemplation" of the doctrine of election. But, as is plain from the very last sentence of this article, mere meditation and contemplation of the truth of election will never lead nor incite one to Christian virtue. And if thus matters are presented, you have nothing but the very moralistic philosophy in which all Arminianism must itself end. The rock-bottom basis of all that the fathers here teach concerning the fact that the elect for a fact draw from the sense and certainty of their election and from the contemplation thereof daily more material for humbling themselves before God, *et cetera*, is nothing less than the truth which the *Heidelberg Catechism* maintains when this objection is brought against the doctrine of free justification, namely, that a careless and profane Christian is an impossibility. And why is it impossible? Because it is contrary to the very nature of God's grace of election. After all, do not forget that the *Canons* have already taught us

that election is "the fountain of every saving good; from which proceed faith, holiness, and the other gifts of salvation, and finally eternal life itself, as its fruits and effects." If, therefore, any individual elect has attained the "sense and certainty of this election," it can only mean that the grace of election has already been realized in him, so that he has received faith, holiness, and the other gifts of salvation. And by grace contemplating these benefits, — and then emphatically only by grace, — he finds daily more material for growing in the infallible fruits of election.

And in the third place, notice now, — to sum up the matter, — just how "far distant" it is that by this doctrine and its meditation the elect should be rendered sluggish in the observance of the divine commands, or carnally secure. It is as far distant as east from west, as black from white.

And finally, the fathers emphasize this truth yet more strongly by claiming that this carnal security and sluggishness in observing the divine commands, instead of being found in the elect, are as a rule found in the reprobate, and that too, in a certain class of reprobate, namely, such who rashly presume to be elect and who idly and wantonly chatter about election, while they are unwilling to walk in the ways of the elect. Such people can be found: people who the grace of election; people who use a fatalistic falsification know all about election, but who have never spiritually tasted of the truth of election in order to excuse an ungodly walk. Concerning them the *Canons* stipulate two things: first of all, we are instructed that such people can always be marked by their walk, because they refuse to walk in the ways of the elect, that is, in the way of sanctification. And secondly, the fathers connect the sin and its visitation when they add: "by the just judgment of God." In other words, God visits their sin of rash presumption and wanton trifling and carnal security upon their own heads, and they are hardened in the very sins in which they walk, and go down to destruction.

But to attribute such phenomena to the divine grace of election is nothing short of blasphemy.

H.C.H.



THE GOD WHO SITS ENTHRONED ON HIGH

The God who sits enthroned on high
The foolish in their heart deny;
Not one does good; corrupt in thought,
Unrighteous works their hands have wrought.

From heaven the Lord with searching eye
Looked down the sons of men to try,
To see if any understood
And sought for God, the only good.

From righteousness they all depart,
Corrupt are all, and vile in heart;
Yea, every man has evil done;
Not one does good, not even one.

Psalms 14:1-3

DECENCY and ORDER

The Ministry Of The Word

"The office of the ministry is to continue in prayer and in the ministry of the Word, to dispense the sacraments, to watch over his brethren, the elders and deacons, as well as the congregation, and finally, with the elders, to exercise church discipline and to see to it that everything is done decently and in good order." — Article 16

It is generally agreed that the word "office" in this article refers to the functions of the ministry rather than to the idea of the office as such. Dr. H. Bouwman writes: „Het woord ambt komt hier niet voor in de beteekenis, waarin het thans gebruikt wordt. Naar de hedendaagsche opvatting beteekent ambt: de maatschappelijke betrekking, die iemand bekleedt, de openbare werkkring, waarin iemand geplaatst is tengevolge van eene benoeming door het openbare gezag van de overheid, zoals het ambt van burgemeester, rechter, enz. of ook eene bediening in de kerk van Christus, waartoe iemand van Christus' wege geroepen is. Naar de oude opvatting van het woord beteekent ambt de dienst of de bediening, die iemand heeft te vervullen, het werk, dat hij heeft te verrichten, de taak of de plicht, die op hem rust, . . . (pg. 485, Vol. I)"

With this Monsma and Van Dellen substantially agree. They write: "It should be noted that Article 16 speaks of the duty, work or task of the Minister, and not of the office of the ministry as such. The word office as used in our Church Order sometimes refers to the official, authoritative position of the office-bearers in the Church of Christ, and sometimes to the duties of the office and not to the office itself." (pg. 74)

Nevertheless, we shall not confine our writing to the functions of the office alone. We consider it proper and necessary to write somewhat in detail of the office as well as its functions in this connection. We do so because the subject matter itself is very important and may be emphasized especially in our day when the truth concerning the ministry of the Word is no longer regarded and the church, fallen into a state of degradation, gives clear and abundant evidences of modernism. Such decadence becomes prominent even in nominal Reformed circles where the ministry is no longer governed by the sound principles of the Word of God. Profitable it will be, therefore, to recapitulate some of these principles which govern not only the functions of the office but the office itself in order that "this holy ordinance of God may not be violated or slighted and that everyone may esteem the ministers of God's Word, and the elders of the Church, very highly for their work's sake, and be at peace with them without murmuring, strife or contention, as much as possible." (Belgic Confession, Art. 31)

Before writing of these things in particular we should also notice that Article 16 of the church order, even if in-

terpreted as referring to the functions of the ministerial office, is not intended as an exhaustive list of these duties. Neither is it a cursory list. Dr. Bouman says: „De opsomming der werkzaamheden in Article 16 is dan ook niet limitatief, alsof het werk des dienaars hiertoe beperkt zou zijn, maar praescriptief, bij wijze van voorschrift en voorbeeld." (The summation of the duties in Article 16 is then not limitative, as if the work of the minister shall be limited thereto, but prescriptive, by manner of prescription and illustration.) The article simply designates the essential duties of the minister from which other labors are logically deduced.

The Thirtieth Article of the Confession does the same thing when it speaks of the spiritual policy by which the church of Christ is to be governed. Essential to that policy is it "that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God, and to administer the sacraments." (Confession, Art. 30) No one could possibly conclude from this that this is all that ministers are required to do.

The Call-Letter used in our churches is more explicit in this respect. It states, "The labours that we expect of you — should it please God to send you to us — are: Preaching twice on the Lord's Day, attending to catechetical instruction, to family visiting and calling on the sick, and furthermore of all things that pertain to the work of a faithful and diligent servant of the Lord, all these agreeably to the Word of God, as interpreted by our Forms of Unity and the Church Order of Dordrecht, as amended by the rules of our churches." Although several duties are mentioned here which are not included in the church order, also this is not intended as a complete list. This is evident from the statement, "and of all things that pertain to the work of a faithful and diligent servant of the Lord," which is rather general and may include a number of labors which it is even quite impossible to attempt to enumerate as they arise in the course of the ministry out of local circumstances.

Finally, we should notice that the duties of the minister of the gospel are set forth rather fully in the Form of Ordination. The Form is too lengthy to quote here so we will take only a partial excerpt from it.

"... the office of pastors and ministers of God's word is:

"First, that they faithfully explain to their flock the Word of the Lord, revealed by the writings of the prophets and the apostles

"Secondly, it is the office of the Ministers, publicly to call upon the name of the Lord in behalf of the whole congregation which is the same as 'continue in prayers', Art. 16 D.K.O.)

"Thirdly, their office is to administer the sacraments

"Finally, it is the duty of the Ministers of the Word, to keep the church of God in good discipline, and to govern it in such a manner as the Lord hath ordained"

From these references it should be evident that among all the various duties connected with the ministerial office, the

foremost or the heart-beat of them all is the preaching of the Word of God. This, in the words of T. M. Nichols, makes the minister's calling the "noblest and most exalted office to which man can aspire."

In Volume 12, pg. 436 of the Standard Bearer, Rev. Hoeksema wrote:

"But the preacher must be minister of the Word of God."

"That makes his calling incomparable, unique, super-human! He must deny himself, men, the world, the wisdom of men, all that is of the world, its conventions, its customs, its self-will, its lie, its deceitfulness; also its wisdom, goodness, nobility, righteousness, philanthropy, charity, glory, ambition, success, power; its aims and aspirations; he must listen only to the word of God, that impossible Word, which no man will hear nor even can will to hear, which is heard, not at all in the world, but only in the sphere of grace and by grace, and which ye men pretend to hear when they do not hear it; and having listened to that Word of God, only *listened*, without contradiction, and having filled his soul with that Word, and only after he is quite sure that his soul is filled with nothing but that Word, he must speak! . . ."

"And all that is mere Man, within him and without, will oppose him both in hearing and in speaking!"

"His path is beset with temptations to 'corrupt the Word of God', to mix that Word with the word of men, in order that he may please mere Man!"

"Who is sufficient unto these things?"

"And who, that serves in the ministry of the Word of God, does not realize that he is a man of unclean lips?"

"He that never feared and trembled at this ministry has never fully realized the 'awful glory' of that calling!"

Such is indeed the pivot of the minister's task!

And to this may be added another quotation from A. W. Pink:

"The preacher's task is both the most honourable and the same time the most responsible one. He professes to be a most solemn of any calling, the most privileged and at the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, a messenger sent forth by the Most High. To misrepresent His Master, to preach any other gospel than His, to falsify the message which God has committed to his trust, is the sin of sins which brings down upon him the anathema of heaven (Gal. 1:18) and will be visited with the sorest punishment awaiting any creature. Scripture is plain that the heaviest measure of Divine wrath is reserved for unfaithful preachers. (Matt. 23:14, Jude 13)."

Such is the seriousness of the matter.

The implications of this central task of the minister we will consider later. Here we are only to emphasize its important place in the role of pastoral duty. It can be abundantly shown from Scripture that preaching the Word is indeed the foremost of the minister's duties. In his letter to the Corinthians Paul writes: "Now then we are ambassadors for (in behalf of) Christ." Titus, he exhorts, to "hold fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

Timothy is called to, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine, continue in them . . ." The same epistle speaks of the elders who "labor especially in the word and doctrine." Characteristic of those who rule in the church, according to Hebrews 13:7, is that "they have spoken unto you the Word of God." The preacher is one sent to proclaim the gospel of peace and to bring glad tidings of good things. (Romans 10:15) In I Corinthians 9:16 the apostle says, "for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." To the Galatians he writes that God had separated him from his mother's womb and called him by His grace to reveal His Son in him, that he might preach him among the heathen.

To these may be added numerous passages. But always it is evident that the preaching stands upon the foreground. It is first. Other labors, significant though they are, must be considered only in the light of the primary duty — the exalted calling to preach the living Word of the living God!

(To be continued)

G.v.d.B.

A Parenthesis

The other day I came across a few quotations which are of such interest and timeliness that I thought it worth while to interrupt my current series of writings on the Church Order and insert this parenthetical article. Although I've frequently been tempted to discuss various pertinent articles of the Church Order, chosen at random, I have refrained from doing so but just this once I take the liberty to jump ahead and discuss with you the comments of Monsma and VanDellen on Article 79 of the D.K.O. These remarks are pertinent to the case of H. De Wolf and the First Church as the reader will soon enough observe.

We begin to quote from Page 327 of "The Church Order Commentary." Here the question is raised, "May a Classis Depose Elders and Deacons?" This question as such has nothing to do with the history recently made in our churches as no Classis ever attempted deposition of anyone. It has been presented as though Classis East initiated discipline but this is entirely untrue as has been repeatedly shown in the past. But notice what Monsma and Van Dellen have to say in reply to the above question. We quote:

"Some have contended that a Classis may depose Consistories. The present authors feel that no major assembly, according to Reformed Church polity and the Church Order, has the right to depose a minor assembly. The deposition of a Consistory, for example, by a Classis or Synod would seem to be a violation of the integrity and of the rights of the particular Church concerned, whereas the Church Order in more than one article seeks to safeguard this integrity and these rights. (Cf. Art. 30, 84) Moreover, Reformed Church government does not tolerate group-disciplining. Discipline, according to our Reformed conception, is always individual and never communal." (pg. 327)

It is to be noticed here that although Monsma and Van Dellen belong to the Christian Reformed Church, this is not the accepted view of that church. Monsma and Van Dellen express here the view of Dr. Van Lonkhuyzen which is a condemnation of the actions of the Christian Reformed Church in 1924. This polity we also maintained and defended over against the hierarchy of the Synod of '24.

Now the defenders of this polity write further on page 328 as follows. Please note that all italics in the following excerpt are mine and brief comment by the undersigned appear in parenthesis. We quote:

"If the case of an Elder or Deacon is brought to Classis by way of appeal on the part of individual members of the Church, *or on the part of one or more consistory members*, the appellants feeling and claiming that the Consistory as a whole is negligent or in error, then what is the correct procedure? (Such was exactly the case before Classis East in May, 1953.) Then Classis deliberates and draws its conclusions. If the decision is to the *effect that the Elder(s) or Deacon(s) should be suspended or deposed*, the Consistory concerned is informed regarding this decision and proceeds to execute the judgment rendered. *Again, Classis has a full right to appoint a committee to help the Consistory in the execution of its task.* (My italics here express that the supposition of Monsma and Van Dellen is the reality of Classis East's decisions.) If a Consistory feels that it cannot in good conscience accept the advice, it may appeal to Synod. If Synod sustains the Classis the Consistory should give immediate execution to the judgment of Classis. That is to say, the Consistory should suspend or depose the office-bearer in question. Failure to do so would bear dire consequences. For in such a case those Consistory members and individual members of the Church concerned who desire to adhere to the decisions of Classis and Synod should meet and declare the deflecting or recalcitrant Consistory members to be out of office, and new Elders and Deacons should be elected in their place forthwith. An extraordinary congregational meeting of this kind should be called under the guidance of classical delegates, or of a neighboring Consistory, preferably the former, to give assurance that all things will be done in good order."

Thus far the quotation.

Now it ought to be noticed that where Monsma and Van Dellen speak of making an appeal to Synod, this did not occur in the case of De Wolf because the latter refused to walk in the way of submission and appeal. De Wolf and his supporters claim to be the Consistory of the First Church. Even if it would be granted that this is the case, *which it by no means is*, their conduct is contrary to all order because they attempt to lord it over the Classis and refused the orderly way of appeal.

Concerning this Monsma and Van Dellen also write as follows:

"If any Consistory member thus deposed refuses to acknowledge his deposition and seeks to exercise his former

rights, he makes himself liable to discipline as an individual member.

"If one or more deposed Consistory members, together with certain adherents belonging to the church concerned, refuse to honor the acts of deposition and the election of new office-bearers, and when these moreover begin to hold separate meetings for worship, *Classis should declare these members to be a schismatic group, outside of the Christian Reformed denomination and having forfeited all rights and privileges.*" (pp. 328)

Thus far the quotation.

Isn't it obvious that this is exactly what Classis East did in its sessions in October 1953 with the exception that the words "Christian Reformed denomination" in the above quotation in this case become "Protestant Reformed Denomination?" Isn't it also self-evident that the same Classis had no other alternative than to rule as it did with respect to the cases of Kok, Blankespoor and Knott, who continued to recognize and support the schismatics in spite of Classis' decisions? Our readers can readily understand in the light of factual history that those who have left us have trampled under foot all order and decency, all Reformed Church rule, and wantonly have chosen to walk in the way of Independency, pure and simple. Our church political differences are not so much a difference of interpreting Reformed Church polity but it becomes more and more evident that our difference is that of the Reformed and the Congregationalistic conceptions.

And, finally, we should add that throughout this history the Classis never denied the opposition the right of existence. If their consciences (??) forbade them to be Protestant Reformed and to submit to the doctrines and polity of the Protestant Reformed Churches, the way is open for them to either affiliate with others with whom they have much in common or to establish themselves as separate churches but they must then do so honestly and not attempt to rob the Protestant Reformed Churches of name and possessions. In this they sin against the holy commandment of God Who judges righteously without respect of persons.

But then, on the other hand, can it ever be expected that those addicted to heresies deal honestly?

G.v.d.B.



O LORD, OUR LORD, IN ALL THE EARTH

O Lord, our Lord, in all the earth
How excellent Thy Name!
Thy glory Thou hast spread afar
In all the starry frame.

From lips of children, Thou, O Lord,
Hast mighty strength ordained,
That adversaries should be stilled
And vengeful foes restrained.

Psalm 8:1, 2

ALL AROUND US

Reformed or Arminian?

"Gereformeerd of Arminiaans?" i. e., Reformed or Arminian? that is the question which the Rev. Idzerd Van Dellen placed at the head of his department in *De Wachter* of October 19th. It is a question to which the Reverend, in our opinion, could have given a definite answer but did not. True, his article left the impression that he knew where he stood as to being Reformed or Arminian, but he closes his article with almost the same question with which he began, and therefore left the matter hanging in the air as far as his readers were concerned.

Rev. Van Dellen in his own characteristic manner tells of a meeting he attended in the Civic Auditorium in Holland, Michigan, which was sponsored by the Youth for Christ organization in that city. The purpose of the meeting, in which some 2000 people were gathered, was to show a film portraying Billy Graham and the London Crusade. The Reverend does not reflect on the picture he saw, but on the atmosphere he was in while he attended the meeting. More particularly he calls attention to the literature the sponsoring organization passed out, and still more particularly to the chairman of the meeting of whom he wrote, and I translate freely: "He spoke much and particularly for the needs of the Youth for Christ movement. It appeared that he with a friend, who was introduced by him, had purchased for this movement a vacated Episcopal Church. The benches were taken out of the church, and now they needed chairs, besides a piano and utensils for the kitchen. He asked his audience to pray and give for this undertaking. Also he enjoined them respecting the collection which was to be taken to defray expenses, and he asked them to fill envelopes which were to be handed out at the close of the meeting in behalf of the Billy Graham campaign. He laid considerable stress on making a definite choice for Christ. Those who were thereto prepared should raise their hands. At the end of the meeting they were expected to come into a room behind the auditorium, where he with others would talk with them. In his talk he used Arminian phraseology. He said with emphasis that it depended on their will, and argued that they must bend their will. Can we as Reformed people go along with the Youth for Christ movement and the Billy Graham Campaign, which are both so Arminianistically colored?"

Come, come, Reverend, we don't ask such questions when we are Reformed people, do we? Rather, we say boldly what is wrong with these movements, showing forth their corruption, and positively declaring that Israel's safety lies in her dwelling alone. Surely, it is not a question to be left hanging in the air whether the Reformed may go along with the Arminian. It is decided.

Kuiper Criticizes De Jong's Book

The Banner of October 15th presents a book review by the Rev. Herman Kuiper on the recent volume produced by the Rev. A. C. De Jong, entitled: *The Well-Meant Gospel Offer — The Views of H. Hoeksema and K. Schilder*. We have not as yet had time to peruse the book and, therefore, are not in a position to tell whether Kuiper's review is to the point or not. We do have, however, a few things to say about what Kuiper writes, and the manner in which he criticizes the writing of De Jong.

Dr. Kuiper begins by saying that the book is "an earnest defense of the position taken by the Christian Reformed Synod of 1924 when it declared that God manifests a favorable attitude towards mankind in general in that he in the gospel makes a well-meant offer of salvation to both the elect and the reprobate."

Further, he states that "the major position of this book is devoted to setting forth and refuting the views of H. Hoeksema, who denies that God ever shows favor to the non-elect and that God offers salvation to men who ultimately perish. The author succeeds admirably in showing that Hoeksema's extreme supralapsarianism and his ardent desire for a logical system, which leaves no room for apparent contradictions, betray him into adopting conclusions which run counter to the clear teaching of Scripture and the tenets of Reformed theology. Cogent indeed are the proofs offered to indicate that Hoeksema, in his efforts to bolster his position, time and again resorts to exegesis which violently contorts various Scripture passages. In this connection it is especially worthy of note how our author proves from Scripture the untenable character of Hoeksema's claim that God's covenant promise is addressed exclusively to the elect children of believing parents."

Kuiper also notes that De Jong has found a "marked harmony between K. Schilder and H. Hoeksema in that both deny on speculative, extra-biblical grounds that God is favorably inclined towards reprobate sinners." And he also notes that De Jong believes that Hoeksema is "more consistent in maintaining this position without any reservations." Schilder evidently contradicts himself when "he also stoutly maintains that the covenant promise is a conditional promise of salvation for all the children of believers." According to Kuiper, De Jong agrees with Schilder on this last point, but he argues against him and Hoeksema on the matter of a denial of God's favorable attitude towards the reprobate.

Then Kuiper takes De Jong to task for not always adhering to what he calls "the excellent rule" which both he and De Jong claim was the example of Calvin, namely, to "accept in faith the teachings of Scripture even though these teachings involve apparent contradictions." He even regards the views of De Jong in some instances as departing "from the traditional Reformed teaching as set forth by such eminent scholars as Calvin, Bavinck, and Warfield." Writes Kuiper, "Of course, we agree wholeheartedly with the author when he combats the idea that the two parts of predestination

are co-ordinate. God does not find the same pleasure in the destruction of the reprobate that he finds in the salvation of the elect. And neither does God blind and harden the reprobate with the same kind of direct action that he employs in enabling the elect to believe savingly. Of course, God is not the author of sin and neither does he force anybody to sin against his will. The sinner who disbelieves and disobeys acts as a free agent. He is fully responsible for his wrongdoing and is to be accounted guilty and deserving of punishment. And in man's final condemnation God surely takes his sin into account. Nevertheless it is the commonly accepted Reformed teaching that both preterition and election find their last cause in God's sovereign good pleasure. The foreseen faith and obedience of the elect were not the ground of their election. And neither was the foreseen sin of fallen humanity the ultimate ground why God decided to pass some men by with his saving grace. It has seemed good to God, whose ways are past tracing out, to permit sin with an efficacious permission. His providential rule covers in a way that we cannot understand the evil as well as the good So it does seem hazardous to claim that a sinner does not reject God's offer of salvation because he was reprobated, but that he is a reprobate because he does not want to believe."

This last Kuiper claims De Jong teaches in his book. He quotes instances in the book where De Jong makes statements like these: "The rejection of the covenant promise by some covenant members is fully, completely caused by their wicked unbelief." "Those who persistently reject do so because they want to reject and not because they were passed by and left by God in their sinful misery. The decree of preterition is not the cause of unbelief and impiety." "It is a serious inaccuracy to say that God offers salvation to sinners who are already elect and reprobate since God in gospel preaching confronts sinners who are en route to their eternal destinies." "No one disbelieves because he is a reprobate. He is a reprobate because he does not want to believe." Kuiper says these statements "can hardly be squared with his teaching that God sovereignly and unfailingly effectuates his world plan in the course of history." And again, Kuiper says in connection with the statement 'that a sinner does not reject God's offer of salvation because he was reprobated, but that he is a reprobate because he does not want to believe,' "This seems to make God's decree dependent on man's response in contradiction of the Bible teaching on God's absolute sovereignty."

Kuiper then inserts in his article two paragraphs which will be interesting to our readers and which I will quote in full.

"On set purpose we refrain from discussing De Jong's teaching on mediate regeneration and on the character of the covenant promise as being both conditional and unconditional. We only wish to add that the author has made his task overly difficult by following the example of some European theologians who, in seeking to meet the objections of Barth and Brunner to the traditional Reformed view of

predestination, try to make the relation between the decree of reprobation and the sincerity of God's offer of salvation to the non-elect intellectually perspicuous. He could have answered conclusively Hoeksema's and Schilder's denial of a favorable attitude of God by giving a proper exegesis of such texts as Isaiah 55:1-6; Ezekiel 18:23; 33:11; Matthew 11:28; 23:37; and 2 Peter 3:9 as well as of I Timothy 2:4. Instead of doing this, he has presented various considerations which seem to alleviate the sharp contradiction between the teaching of Scripture on God's decree of reprobation and on the well-meant gospel offer.

"Calvin followed a different method. Instead of trying to reconcile these truths, Calvin declared that it is impossible for man to explain how these truths find their unity in the mind of God. According to Calvin our eyes are blinded by intense light, when we seek to understand the will of God so that we cannot with certainty say how God wishes all men to be saved and yet has devoted all the reprobate to everlasting perdition and wishes them to perish. Since the days of Calvin no theologian has improved upon this statement. The keenest mind must bow humbly before the absolute authority of God's Word and accept without gainsaying the paradoxes inherent in the teaching of Scripture."

It would be unfair of me to criticize the book of the Rev. De Jong without first having read it. Hence it would also be unfair for me to agree with the criticism Dr. Kuipers offers on it, though I have a suspicion that Kuiper gives a correct criticism when he says that De Jong departs from the "traditional Reformed teaching as set forth by such eminent scholars as Calvin, etc." He would not dare to cite the quotations he did were they not literally found in the book, unless he quotes like another preacher I know who has been severely criticized for his unethical quotings in Concordia. It is difficult to believe that Kuiper would do this. But be that as it may, I refrain from commenting on De Jong's departure from the traditional and only make a remark or two about Kuiper's criticism.

In the first place, we notice that Kuiper does not like De Jong's method of treating Hoeksema's doctrine re the preaching of the gospel and its intention. He apparently does not like to have Hoeksema's presentation investigated. Rather he would simply ignore it by quoting a few texts of Scripture, and then, instead of exegeting the passages himself, he scolds De Jong for not exegeting them, which texts he claims if properly exegeted should suffice to throw overboard all that Hoeksema has written to sustain his views. But Kuiper is a Doctor, and when one gets a title he probably doesn't need to do any exegeting for the reading public. He needs only to quote a few texts and all is plain, because the Doctor said so. This doesn't sink in with me, Doctor.

In the second place, there is another thought Kuiper expresses in criticism of De Jong's book that I do not like. He has the privilege, of course, of lying down by Calvin and other eminent Reformed theologians and resting im-

PLICITLY on what they said. But I deny him the right to say that either De Jong or any other theologian ought to do the same. Especially is this true with respect to the matter Kuiper is talking about. He claims that there are irreconcilable paradoxes, apparent contradictions in Scripture which Calvin and others believed we should leave alone or rather accept without investigating. One of these paradoxes is that God reprobates sovereignly on the one hand, while at the same time he offers sincerely salvation to the reprobate in the preaching of the gospel on the other. Kuiper accepts both, though in his own mind they are plain contradictions. But when one is a Doctor perhaps his mind is broader and bigger to enable him to carry contradictions in it. I am not a doctor, and perhaps my mind is too small to comprehend contradictions. At any rate, I would rather be accused of being too logical, than too foolish for words.

M.S.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Esteemed Editor :

Since, quotations seem to be in vogue and since the following quote is so applicable to our present church struggle and the "shenanigans" (which, without consulting my Roget's, is the most charitable word I can think of at the moment), allow me to quote a portion of something written many years ago and which may be found in the back of our Psalters in the "Conclusion" at the end of our Canons :

"Wherefore, this Synod of Dort, in the name of the Lord, conjures as many as piously call upon the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, to judge of the faith of the Reformed Churches, not from the calumnies, which, on every side, are heaped upon it; nor from the private expressions of a few among ancient and modern teachers, often dishonestly quoted, or corrupted, and wrested to a meaning quite foreign to their intention; but from the public confessions of the Churches themselves, and from the declaration of the orthodox doctrine, confirmed by the unanimous consent of all and each of the members of the whole Synod. Moreover, the Synod warns calumniators themselves, to consider the terrible judgment of God which awaits them, for bearing false witness against the confessions of so many Churches, for distressing the consciences of the weak; and for laboring to render suspected the society of the truly faithful."

And, that, in my humble opinion is as up to date as you could want it. And it grieves us when we read the indisputable testimony that exactly those things have been done. And, those who are guilty of such things must not think it strange that they are not welcome at my home either officially or otherwise.

Fraternally

George TenElshof

I LOVE THE LORD, HIS STRENGTH IS MINE

I Love the Lord, His strength is mine;
He is my God, I trust His grace;
My fortress high, my shield divine,
My Savior and my hiding place.

My prayer to God shall still be raised
When troubles thick around me close;
The Lord, most worthy to be praised,
Will rescue me from all my foes.

When floods of evil raging near,
Down nigh to death my soul was brought,
I cried to God in all my fear;
He heard and great deliverance wrought.

He came: the earth's foundations quake,
The hills are shaken from their place.
Thick smoke and fire devouring break
In anger dread before His face.

Descending through the bending skies,
With gloom and darkness under Him,
Forth through the storm Jehovah flies
As on the wings of cherubim.

Thick darkness hides Him from the view,
And swelling clouds His presence veil,
Until His glorious light breaks through
In lightning flash and glistening hail.

Jehovah's thunders fill the heaven,
The dreadful voice of God Most High;
With shafts of light the clouds are riven,
His foes, dismayed, in terror fly.

The raging torrents overflow,
And sweep the world's foundations bare,
Because Thy blasts of anger blow,
O Lord of earth and sea and air.

He took me from the whelming waves
Of bitter hate and sore distress;
The Lord, my stay and Helper, saves,
Though mighty foes around me press.

From direful straits He set me free,
He saved the man of His delight;
For good the Lord rewarded me,
Because I kept His ways aright.

Psalm 18